

DCG SG2 Meeting 1_ Minutes

Minutes of the first meeting of
DCG Subgroup 2.

From Ofgem
Date and time of Meeting 10am, 8 September
2010
Location Ofgem

10 September 2010

1. Present

Dora Guzeleva (Chair)
Rosie McGlynn
Anna Fielding
Chris Spence
Jason Brogden
Steve James
Jeremy Guard
Gareth Evans
Alastair Bates
Liz Kenny
Jamie Dunnett
Mark Knight
Prashant Sharma
Andrew Beasley
Jenny Boothe

Ofgem
British Gas
Consumer Focus
EDF Energy
Engage-consulting (ERA)
Eon-UK
First Utility
ICoSS
AMO
RWE Npower
Scottish Power
SSE
Utilita
Utilita
Ofgem

2. Apologies

2.1. Zoe Mcleod – Consumer Focus

3. Introduction

3.1. DG gave a presentation on the issues that are to be considered by the group and the outputs that will be required. It was noted that there are two areas that need to be addressed:

- (i) Arrangements that ensure consumer interest are protected during the period between the technical specifications are confirmed and the DCC Go-Live and
- (ii) The need for any arrangements for transitioning of interim comms contracts to the DCC.

3.2. It was noted that the interim arrangements need to be efficient, practicable and able to be implemented in a timely manner. Also, the interim arrangements should not undermine the efforts leading to the enduring solution.

3.3. The key deliverables for the group fell into two distinct areas; options for interim interoperability arrangements and options for measures necessary to facilitate transition to DCC following DCC Go-Live. For the latter a key consideration is whether any criteria should be applied in allowing the DCC to accept pre DCC comms contracts.

3.4. The group considered whether commercial and technical interoperability could be considered separately. The majority of the group felt that both areas are intrinsically linked and that the two issues will have to come together when the options are being developed.

3.5. One member noted that as solutions are being firmed up the group needs to determine when it would be appropriate for the communications service providers to participate in discussions. The point was made that the DCG and its subgroups were part of an inclusive and transparent process and that contributions from all parties will be required. It was suggested that it would be advisable that services providers were included in this process so that they are aware of the products that may be required of them.

3.6. The group was informed that the issue of conflict of interest had been considered by Ofgem. The view is that as the work of the DCG and its subgroup does not involve making decisions having participation by all relevant parties will ensure impartiality around the activities of the group and the risk.

4. ERA Interim Interoperability Discussion papers

4.1. The ERA provided 3 papers prepared as part of their Supplier Requirements of Smart Metering (SRSM) project pertaining to interim interoperability. These papers covered principles and issues; requirements and solution options.

SRSM Principles and Issues

4.2. The group considered each of the principles set out in this paper. It was noted that the principles were in no particular rank order. It was also noted that the principles should drive the solution options not the technology that is available in the market.

4.3. During the discussion of the proposed principles it was noted that some of the principles may not be compatible with each other for example Ref.6¹ may not be compatible with Ref 7². Some members of the group supported the view that the consumer experience should not be worsened by the interim arrangements and the consumer should be confident that they can obtain the same level of service from incoming supplier as it received from outgoing supplier.

4.4. It was suggested that the principle relating to the consumer experience should be viewed as the primary principle and the others be regarded as supporting.

4.5. In considering the principles the group assumed that the starting point was based on the technical specifications of the meter being confirmed and that the consumer has a smart meter installed and is seeking to change supplier. The expectation is that the meter will remain in situ and can deliver a minimum set of services. The group agreed that it needed to consider what should form the base level of common services to be delivered for the interim period. It was noted that the DCG key principle was to ensure the consumer could still benefit from the change of supplier activity thus maintaining a positive consumer experience.

4.6. The group agreed to work through the list of issues in the ERA paper and then build a catalogues of services.

Issues

4.7. The group considered the list of issues presented in the paper. The views of the group are listed below:

¹ Ref.6 Should not adversely impact customer experience

² Ref.7 Minimal change to/impact on existing industry infrastructure, dataflows, processes and participant systems

Issue Number	Considerations
1a	Timeframe begins from when the technical specifications have been confirmed.
1b	This issue will be considered when the group has developed a number of solution options. A query was raised as to whether currently deployed compliant meters (pre technical specification confirmed) will be covered by the interim arrangements. It was agreed that the arrangements should apply.
2	It was noted that the SME sector of the market will not be obligated to provide an IHD or a gas-valve meter. This may lead to two sets of interim arrangements. The group considered that there should only be one set of arrangements and requirements and that the SME suppliers may need flexibility to exclude particular activity.
3	The group noted that there is no nationally agreed arrangement with respect to the smart meter PPMIP. It was noted that this would require the smart PPM to be converted to a credit meter before the incoming supplier could accept the meter. It was agreed that a log of issues for this group will need to be maintained. It was questioned whether there is a need for the incoming supplier to inform the customer that they will not support a prepayment arrangement. Suppliers indicated that this could be done through the acquisition process. Consumer Focus indicated that there may be a need to inform the customer of these changes during the interim period.
4	The group agreed that the services needed to be determined and not the functionality of the metering equipment.. However as the final WAN solution and accreditation party will not be available, rules will need to be developed to for the interim.
5	Group considered that there is a link between the deployment targets and roll out plan therefore the principle behind the solution options need to complement these targets. However it was noted that the level of risk should be low.
6	The group noted that there were a number of other processes that need to be considered including change of tenancy, meter exchange However, these should be considered after the services and principles were agreed.
7	The group proposed that the process by which the arrangements are implemented is considered after the services and principles have been agreed. The group considered whether arrangements should be voluntary or mandatory and whether they should be implemented via existing regulatory arrangements or via commercial arrangements. The group was asked to provide Ofgem with a number of

	implementation options by Monday am that will be discussed at the next meeting.
8	AS ABOVE
9	The group felt that this issue was no longer relevant as the agreed timeframe for the interim arrangements began with the confirmation of the technical specifications
10	Commercial interoperability with respect to rental costs, communication and agent services costs were consider to be integral to the interim arrangements.
11	As 1b
12	This issue has to be part of the interim arrangements and is integral to the interim arrangements.

4.8. It was agreed that the ERA would update the Principles and Issues paper based on this discussion and circulate prior to the next meeting of the subgroup.

5. Catalogue of Service requirements

5.1. The group discussed the services that should be provided as a minimum during the interim period. The catalogue of services is listed below:

- Provision of meter reads
 - Accurate remote reads utilised for billing, settlement and CoS (opening and closing reads).
- Availability of historical consumption data by the new supplier
 - The prospectus proposes that the meter should hold consumption data for 12 months. A view was expressed that the outgoing supplier should relinquish access to historical data as they do not need the data. The group suggested that there were 2 mechanisms on how this could be achieved:
 - 1. A central data hub that would restrict access to the data,
 - 2.the out-going supplier would erase the historical data, or
 - The point was made that consumers must have the right to decide who has access to their historical data.
 - The group discussed that where the data is held (IHD or meter) will be a matter of design however if the costs of a design option is prohibitive this will be communicated back to the programme.

- Certainty of customer transfer
 - The group felt that there needs to be a validation regime that ensures that the customer transfer process is completed successfully. Members of the group indicated that this was a major design requirement as it would require a process by which the new supplier disables to old supplier access to the meter.
- Capacity for the new supplier to remotely reconfigure tariffs on the meter
 - The group noted that to have capability the meter needs to hold the consumption and tariff data. It was acknowledged that the IHD had the capability to hold this data but there are no process rules on how the data is communicated to the IHD.
 - The group indicated that this would be a desirable service but an impact assessment/ CBA would need to be undertaken.
- PPM smart meter should be switched to credit mode before being adopted by the new supplier.
- Maintain the ability to teleswitch during the interim period.
 - It was indicated that the capability was available but it had not been determined that it was practicable under the interim interoperability arrangements.
- The availability of tamper alarms
 - The group considered that this service would be desirable but would need further consideration.

The group had a general discussion which indicated that any process that is not currently supported by DTS or UK Link will require a lead time to be developed and tested.

- Capacity for remote meter disablement/enablement
 - Some suppliers stated that this ability was essential for their customers.
- Accuracy of master clock data
 - This was deemed as a desirable but not essential service.
- Upgradability of firmware and software
 - This was deemed an essential requirement to maintain data security but it was noted that this would require a multicast/broadcast communication process. The group agreed that this was a significant issue and posed a significant risk if interim interoperability was to go live without this service being available.

The group felt that an impact assessment will need to be undertaken for the interim interoperability arrangements.

The group briefly discussed a number of other services indicating whether they were essential or desirable.

Service	Desirability
System diagnostics	Desirable
Testing meter communication line	Essential
Service life notification	Not need
Supplier information to customer via IHD	Not needed
Capability to purge and download data to the meter	This will depend on the solution
Energisation status and remote testing	Not needed
Supplier re-enablement of meter	Desirable
Notification of failure to obtain a read	Essential
Calorific update	Not needed.

A number of other issues were considered by the group for which action was required:

Responsibility for the IHD – this should have the same solution as the enduring arrangements

Seamless appointment of MAPs and MOPs – the group considered that this was an issue for SPAA to resolve..

5.2. It was agreed that the ERA would update the requirements paper in light of this discussion and circulate prior to the next subgroup meeting.

6. Consideration of Solution Options

6.1. A member of the group suggested that prior to reviewing the solution options provided by the ERA it would be better to map the services onto the existing processes as this would provide an indication of what new service processes would be required which will lead to the appropriate solution options. The group, however, considered that due to time constraints the group was not able to consider the solutions.

Minutes

DCG: SG2 Interim Interoperability

ACTION LOG

Action ref:	Meeting Date	Minute ref:	Action	Owner	Status Update
001	8 September 2010	4.7 (7)	Group members to provide examples of governance arrangements to facilitate the interim arrangements	DCGSC2 Members	Open
002	8 September 2010	4.8	ERA to update Issues and Principles paper	ERA	Open
003	8 September 2010	5.1	Consideration of MAP/MOP appointment during the interim period	Mark Knight (SSE)	Open
004	8 September 2010	5.2	ERA to update the requirements paper	ERA	Open